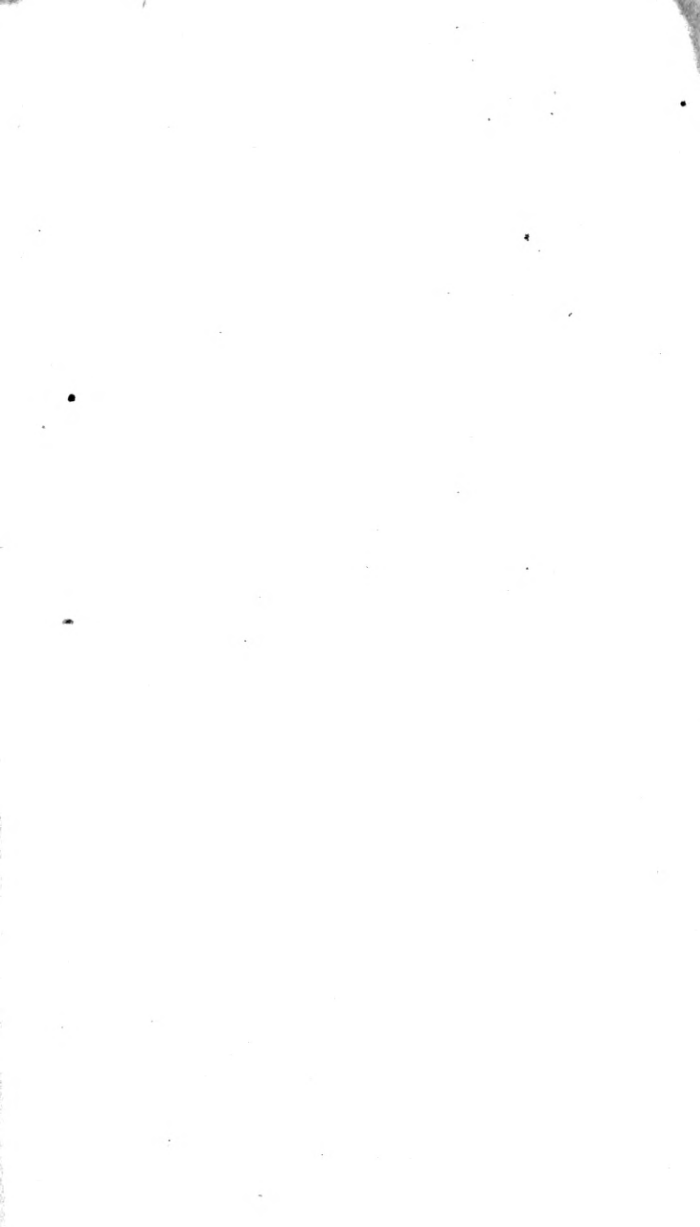


LIBRARY  
OF THE  
UNIVERSITY  
OF ILLINOIS





SHE LOVED MUCH :  
AND  
THE HEM OF HIS GARMENT.

TWO SERMONS,

WITH A PREFACE

CONTAINING SOME REMARKS ON THE LATE SCHISMS.

BY

WALTER FARQUHAR HOOK, D.D.

VICAR OF ST. PETER'S, LEEDS ;

AND CHAPLAIN IN ORDINARY TO HER MAJESTY.

LONDON :

F. AND J. RIVINGTON ;

PARKER, OXFORD ; I. & J. J. DEIGHTON, CAMBRIDGE ;

GODDARD, HULL ; AND

T. HARRISON, 55, BRIGGATE, LEEDS.

1846.



TO

THE REVEREND GEORGE WRAY, M. A.

RECTOR OF LEVEN

AND FORMERLY LECTURER OF LEEDS

THESE SERMONS

ARE INSCRIBED

WITH FEELINGS OF DEEP RESPECT AND GRATITUDE

BY

WALTER FARQUHAR HOOK

MDCCCXLVI.





## PREFACE.

THE first of the two following Sermons was preached on the 28th of July, at the Consecration of Leven Church in the East Riding of Yorkshire, and again at the re-opening of the Church of St Mary-de-Crypt, in the city of Gloucester, on Thursday the 27th of November. The second was preached at the re-opening of Trinity Church, Hull, on Wednesday the 10th of December.

The Author has the more readily complied with the request that these Sermons shall be published, because, in a time of much public offence and suspicion, it seems incumbent upon those, whose attachment to the distinctive principles of the Reformed Church of England is unalterable, to take every public opportunity of making their sentiments known. If there ever was a time, when it was important to assert those sound principles, by which the Church of England for the last three centuries has been as much distinguished from Romanism, as she is from Ultra-Protestantism, the importance is increased at the present juncture, when the fierce contest of these two extremes is producing such disastrous consequences, so deeply affecting her internal peace.

We have lived to see men quitting without compunction that branch of the Catholic Church, which God has planted in their native land, and betaking themselves to the schismatic sect intruded by the Bishop of Rome, with as little apparent scruple or hesitation, as a man might feel in vacating one post of duty or preferment for another, to which he had been lawfully called. And such grievous and sinful acts are palliated, by being styled by the mild term of secession, and not schism,—a going forth to labour in another portion of the same vineyard, rather than a breaking down of the hedge of our own sacred inclosure, and, as far as the power of such acts extends, laying open its treasures and choice fruits to the hand of the spoiler. Surely schism is the same thing, whether committed for the sake of going to Rome, or to Geneva; and it is a miserable compromise of truth to speak of these offences against unity, as if the offenders were making their choice between two communions equally open to them, and where their decision was a matter of indifference.

There is another way of accounting for these secessions, as they are called; which is still more shocking. It is said that the Church of Rome has gained possession of the perverted ones, in answer to the prayers, which we have seen so often advertized as offered by persons and societies in that Communion for the reduction of England to the Romish faith. Those who have admitted this solution of the present state of things into their minds,

should ask themselves earnestly, what they think of the terms of Communion imposed on her own members by the Church of England. Are those terms Catholic and primitive, or are they not? And on the other hand, what do they think of the Roman terms of Communion? But if the Roman terms are, as English Churchmen believe and know, neither primitive nor Catholic, how can they suffer themselves to think that God has permitted men to join an erring Communion, and leave one which is clear of the guilt of imposing error, in answer to a mistaken prayer? What is this, but to make God Himself a consentient party to an act of sin? We might indeed press this point still further, if we were to inquire to *whom* these prayers of the Church of Rome have in most cases been offered; whether to God the Father or the Blessed Trinity, in the name of Christ, or to the Virgin Mary; whom one of the most distinguished among those who have left us professes that the Romanists have *deified*, and justifies their act by insinuating that the eternal statute against idols may be abrogated by the Gospel.\*

It has not been through such prayers of Rome that our deceived brethren have been led astray; but, as is indeed partly confessed by those who palliate their conduct, they have not been proof against the malignity of Ultra-Protestant persecu-

\* Mr. Newman, in his last work, seems to go beyond Rome itself on this point; see his miserable casuistry, p. 434, 5. Was it for this reason that his new guides refused to revise his book?

tion. It is notorious, that the Ultra-Protestant press has been employed, not only in reprobating principles which either are or are deemed erroneous, but in printing statements by which private confidence has been violated, shameless calumnies propagated, and malignant passions excited, to such an extent as to threaten disgrace to the very name of Christianity. This "evil-speaking, lying, and slandering" of what is called the religious world, has first alienated men's hearts from the Church of England, and then induced them to think more kindly than they ought to have done of the Church of Rome. The first doubt suggested to the mind has been, "Can this be true Christianity, which produces such fruits?" "the second, "Can Rome itself, to which these persons seem to ascribe all evil, be so bad as this?" Finding nothing but hatred, where they looked for love, and finding on the other hand every appearance of sympathy and affection among those who hoped to win them, whether at home or abroad,\* it is nothing surprising if a few persons, eminently gifted in other respects, have suffered those feelings to mislead them, which, however disguised from themselves, are too plainly visible both in their acts and words.†

\* See particularly M. Goudon's *Essai du Mouvement Religieux en Angleterre*, a work written in an amiable spirit, but, as is generally the case with members of the French Church, shewing a very imperfect knowledge of the state of the Church of England.

† *e. g.* Mr. Newman disclaims it at the end of his book; but where can one read ten pages of his book without seeing it?

Who can look upon these things unmoved? Who can think of them without the most painful expectations of evil to come, when they see so many in the English Church, united, not by the Christian principle of love, but by the Anti-Christian bond of a common hatred? The two great parties into which the Church is split, seem so entirely alienated from each other, that nothing but an extinction of one or the other is likely to restore peace. There is, as it were, a civil war in our Zion. And yet on both sides there are hundreds, nay, thousands, who are only kept back from the fraternal embrace, by the ambition of party leaders in their localities, and by the food of bitterness continually administered to them through the press which represents the so-called "religious world." Hence it is, that the Low-Churchman regards the High-Churchman, as a person, by whom good works are placed in opposition to faith as the instrument of Justification, relied upon, but seldom performed,—who obscures the essentials of religion by forms and ceremonies, and delights in forms and ceremonies, because they bring him nearer to the practices of the Church of Rome, to which in heart he belongs. As he considers the Pope and Papal Rome to be the only Antichrist, it is the natural consequence that those whom he suspects of favouring Rome appear to him to be under Satanic influence; and so much has been declared in express words, by one of the Bishops who is understood to speak the sentiments of the Low Church party. Hence the

public ear is abused with stories of secret plots contrived with Romish emissaries; and nothing is wanting but an equal degree of vulgar credulity to re-enact such scenes as those in which Titus Oates was once pre-eminent.

But how in the meantime is the Low-Churchman regarded by the High-Churchman? The so-styled Evangelicals are supposed to be a worldly, ambitious, luxurious class, full of malevolence, mistaking feeling for faith, and assured of salvation while living in known sin: it is scarcely conceived possible that an Evangelical can be a religious person. This I have heard stated, as the general impression among High-Churchmen, by a very religious man. Even the Satanic influence is retorted; because, as Satan is the father of lies, and this is a sin peculiarly prevalent, as it is said, among the class of persons referred to, it is inferred that Satan must have deluded them.

I state these facts broadly, in the hope that on either side it may startle some, and lead the Orthodox as well as the Evangelical to ask themselves what is likely to be the end of this mutual hatred. I am myself as much convinced that there are among the Evangelicals persons led by other feelings than self-indulgence and party spleen, as I am that there are multitudes of Orthodox Churchmen, whose life is a pattern of self-denial, reverential fear, and love. The difference lies for the most part not in doctrine, but in different modes of applying the same doctrine: and, this difference

can soon be satisfactorily explained, if a spirit of love shall bring together those whom party leaders for their selfish ends labour to keep apart.

But the danger is now imminent. If the heavenly principle of love be not invited back, not only our own pure faith, as it is taught in the English Church, but Christianity itself must fall before the enemies of the Cross. Every thing is conspiring to give strength to Infidelity. The triumph of Romanism, wherever it supplants a purer faith, is a step to the triumph of Infidelity. Wherever Romanism is dominant, there Infidelity abounds; as Superstition must destroy true Religion, and no man can innocently add to Divine Truth even one false tenet, however inconsiderable, any more than he can, without loss to his spiritual condition, cut off one article from the Catholic Faith. In Italy, in France, and Spain, it is notorious, that, while the lower classes are encouraged in practices bordering on idolatry, the middle classes are for the most part infidel. Some higher and more subtle minds, capable of explaining away what is obnoxious to the common sense of mankind and the plain teaching of Scripture, may possibly keep themselves in a purer atmosphere, and suffer less harm from entertaining errors which have less practical effect upon their conduct; but even these are unconsciously aiding the cause of infidelity by the defence of such errors. The object of all apologists of the Romish system is to shew, by exaggerated statements of protestant false

doctrine, that there is no medium between avowed infidelity, and all that the Church of Rome requires to be believed and practised. You must, in short, accept popery with all its concomitants, or you must be an infidel. Can any one be surprised, if such a mode of argument is found to drive men to infidelity? The powerful intellect and learning of Mr. Newman has not protected him from the enchantment of this fallacy; and it is a strange and alarming symptom, which meets us at every turn in his late work, how credulity and scepticism are blended together. Who can divine for what further developments a mind that has so often shifted its ground may yet be ripening?\*

\* The greatest admirer of Mr. Newman, with every disposition to look favourably on his case, must admit that this book shews a mind sadly fallen. It is by no means what it professes to be, a grave logical treatise, but is full of appeals to the lower faculties, ill disguised by a shew of argument. We are told by his friends, who are lamenting his wrongs, and who inform us that they cannot blame though they will not imitate him, that he was all along full of respect for old fashioned high churchmen, and would say nothing offensive to *them*. How does this appear in his work? There is much lamentable sophistry in his book, and some particularly concerning this point. See especially the paragraph numbered 6, p. 48. I will not say more of that passage than this, that it must confirm us in the opinion formed on the perusal of certain letters lately published by popish priests, that buffoonery is part of the Romish system. Romanists are well aware that it is from high church principles their cause has most to fear; high churchmen are therefore the object of their greatest dislike. It is against these principles that they are now directing all their forces: it is to refute Anglicanism, not Protestantism, that Romish tracts are circulated. And the Romanizers who still remain among us, only remaining to add to our confusions, are most contemptuous against Anglicanism, and most bitter against honest Anglicans.



But while Infidelity has thus an ally in Romanism, it is has an ally equally strong in Ultra-Protestantism. Rationalism has crept in among us: truths, orthodox in themselves, are maintained too often, not on Catholic, but on rationalistic principles: as if their importance lay, not in their being contained in the certain Word of God, and attested by the creeds of the Catholic Church, but in the power of the individual mind to appropriate or explain them. While such a test is admitted, the articles of the Christian faith may be upheld by polemics as the badge of a party; but their foundation is undermined. It is a fact that Rationalism is beginning to be advocated in some of our Schools and even in the Universities; and this, too, is a system which has its enchantments for speculative minds, idolizers of pure reason, and disposed to like that kind of Religion which they can work out for themselves.

By both these extremes a doctrine of development is adopted. Romanists speak of a germ of doctrine existing in primitive times, which has gradually developed itself into the creed of Pope Pius. Rationalists speak of the Scripture as a mine, by digging in which, new doctrines are from time to time discovered or developed by man's wisdom. Both these systems converge; and their tendency is to unite in one grand development of Infidelity.

What, then, is the distinctive principle which the Church of England opposes to these aberrations

on either side? Its root is fixed in the sacred text, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, to day, and for ever." Its axiom is in the well known and memorable words of Pearson, "In Christianity there can be no concerning truth which is not ancient; and whatsoever is truly new, is certainly false." There is enough employment for the highest powers of mind, if we are willing to exercise them in contending "for the faith, once, and once for all, delivered to the saints," the faith received in the primitive undivided Church, and restored, and retained in other days of severest suffering, by our own beloved and holy Mother. Error is various; Truth is one. Error shifts its colours; Truth is permanent. Let Anglicans be true to her who has fed them at her bosom; and they will find no ground of question whether she is true to her Lord. Let them not listen to those who delight to dwell upon faults which a friendly eye could never see, or join the fashionable mode of deteriorating the best and noblest of their country's Institutions. Above all, let them remember, that to fraternize with those, with whom, by our public obligations, we cannot unite, and who will not suffer us to unite with them on equal or Catholic terms, is a betrayal of our public duty; and let them also remember that to circulate Romish Books is a kind of spiritual traffic in contraband articles which naturally and necessarily rouses the indignation of honest men who cannot and ought not to recognize the

special pleading by which it is palliated. We will not deny that the late schismatical acts may be in some measure attributed to our sins, and to the sins of our Rulers, to the provocations of rash censures and uncharitable persecutions: let us not shrink from bearing our reproach as individuals; but let us not charge the faults of individuals upon the system. Rather let us labour that the system of the reformed Church of England may be fairly carried out: let us so exhibit the blessings of the reformation, as connected with a Catholic Church, as to induce other Churches to conduct carefully, but surely, the work of reformation in themselves. Let us not forget that it was a schismatical act in the Pope who first excommunicated us, and that they act schismatically who obey it: let it be borne in mind that no intercourse can take place between the Church of England and the Church of Rome, until the Church of Rome, like the Church of England, has reformed itself. Rome must come to us, for the Church of England will never go to Rome. Anglicans who know the blessings and the privileges won for them by the blood of martyrdom at the time of the Reformation, and who know also the crimes and tyranny which resulted from the connexion of our Church with the papal Court during the middle ages, are not likely to sacrifice them in haste, however much they may have been depreciated by schismatics, or by those who have chosen to take man, not the Church, for their guide, and have called some chosen

teacher Rabbi, instead of Him who only is our Master. Where shall we hope to find the blessing of our Lord's abiding promise, if it be not in a Church, which, while it preserves in its integrity the Episcopate derived from Him, has alone sanctioned and re-established the Rule of Faith, as it was seen to guide the Councils of pure and primitive Christianity?

# SERMON I.

LUKE VII. 47.

“ She loved much.”

I have selected these few short words, in the hope, that being few they will sink the more deeply into our hearts, and afford a fit subject for meditation even to those who shall be unable to attend throughout to the discourse which I am about to deliver on the present most happy occasion. May God the Holy Spirit be with us, and may He grant that, even if in our opinions, in these distracted times, we may be, some of us, found to differ, we may at least have that mark of true Christianity in our souls, that “ we love much.”

You will recollect that the words themselves belong to a very affecting anecdote related in the Gospel according to Luke.

Our Blessed Lord was either in Capernaum or Nain, and was there invited to eat with Simon a Pharisee. “ And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee’s house, brought an alabaster-box of ointment, and stood at His feet behind Him weeping, and began to wash His feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed His feet, and anointed them with the ointment.”

By the translators of what is called the authorized version of the Bible it is asserted, as you will find in the summary of this chapter, that this woman was Mary Mag-

dalene. This appears to have been a notion of some commentators later than the time of the Fathers ; as is also another supposition, that she was the same with Mary the sister of Lazarus. St. Augustine was plainly of a different opinion ; and the characters of the three persons seem distinct from each other.

But I pass by these things, as it is not my intention to involve you in a critical discussion. It is sufficient for my present object to state what is indisputable, that she *had* been a sinner, that she *was* a penitent, and that she had ere this been an object of the Divine mercy and commiseration of our Lord. The latter point is clear, because the motive assigned for her conduct is, that she loved much, and the cause of her much love was her knowledge that much had been forgiven her.

We have seen what the conduct was of this poor penitent because she loved much. How different was the conduct of Simon the Pharisee. Simon perceived that the Lord Jesus was a prophet mighty in word in and deed : he might have said to our Lord, with Nicodemus, “ Rabbi, we know that Thou art a teacher come from God ; for no man can do these miracles that Thou doest except God be with him.” And believing this, desirous also of obtaining a prophet’s reward, he determined to provide our Lord, on this occasion, *with the necessaries of life*. It was a good action ; and our Lord’s acceptance of Simon’s hospitality shews that Simon was not a bad man. Indeed when we remember that he acted counter to the feelings of the Pharisaic party, forming, as that party did, what we should now call the Religious world of the Jews, much praise is due to Simon for doing what he did. But there was absent the one great principle ; he was not influenced by love ; he could manfully overcome the prejudices of his sect ; he could act justly, and not do as the other Pharisees did, when, seeing the miracles of our Lord, they ascribed them to Beelzebub : but he loved little.

## SHE LOVED MUCH.

While he relieved our Lord, he acted in a spirit of proud condescension. If he had loved our Lord, surely he would, on the occasion of his visit, have done every thing that in him lay to make that love manifest : but now half ashamed of what he did,—not prepared to reject, and yet unwilling to receive, as the Messiah, the lowly Man of Sorrows who entered his abode, he did what was necessary, and nothing more. He condescended, and was proud of his condescension, in spite of the malignant remarks to which he would expose himself, to entertain One who was going about doing good,—but he omitted every customary mark of respect which he would have carefully extended to his superior or equal in worldly circumstances. Our Lord marked the neglect : those who loved Him marked the neglect. “Simon,” said our Lord, “I entered thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet ; thou gavest me no kiss : mine head with oil thou didst not anoint.”

How like was the conduct of this proud Pharisee to that of many persons of the present day. How similar his treatment of our Lord and God Incarnate, to their treatment of our Lord’s Representative and Spouse upon earth,—His Holy Church. There are proud men upon earth who, like Simon, not void of religion, feeling on the contrary a strong interest in religion from the good it is calculated to effect, think it nevertheless a kind of condescension, on their part, to patronize the Church ; —a condescension, forsooth, to patronize their own Mother and their Master’s Spouse ; who, instead of acting as dutiful children, think it a merit to be what they call Friends of the Church, to conciliate whose friendship the Church ought to make great sacrifices : and it is with them as it was with Simon ; thinking much of their condescension, and of their patronage of the Church, they regard every thing as superfluous, except what is absolutely necessary for the mere inculcation of the moral precepts of Religion, or the more prominent

doctrines of the Gospel: hundreds of pounds will they expend upon the entertainment of a superior or an equal in this world: *then* only does economy suggest itself when the service or the shrine of God is concerned. Living themselves in princely splendour, they would abscond all magnificence from the worship of Christ our God; asserting that extreme simplicity of worship is becoming the homage we render to our God, because when He was on earth, He was a lowly wanderer and had not where to lay His precious head; forgetting that although the God-man was once in a Body of humiliation, He is now in His glorified Body at the right hand of Power, King of kings, and Lord of lords: forgetting also that if magnificence be eschewed in what pertains to His sanctuary and worship, magnificence must also be avoided in the dwellings and in the doings of His followers; for the disciple is not above his Master, and we may not treat the Master with less respect than the servant. If churches are not to be magnificent, then our bishops must not live in palaces: if the service of the sanctuary is to be of the simplest character, then let our Christian nobles and merchants dismiss their retinue of servants, and serve tables themselves: men should be at least consistent; proud prelates and luxurious princes must sell all they have and give unto the poor, before they preach against decorum in the worship of their God: but while they live in their ceiled houses, the few who love the Lord Jesus, will not suffer the ark of their Lord to remain behind curtains.

Assuredly Simon's conduct admitted of palliation: his friends and flatterers might have pointed out hundreds of poor objects around him in abject poverty, and until these were relieved, his economy, according to their reasoning, would be worthy of praise: besides what had a prophet to do with the elegancies of life? such things he ought to have despised. Simon had made provision for all essential things: was water absolutely necessary? Was



our Lord injured by not receiving a kiss ? A kiss might have been given by a hypocrite or traitor ; He was betrayed by a kiss. Was it absolutely necessary to anoint the head ? How much more profitably the money might have been expended !

Who can gainsay the soundness of all these reasons ? The only answer to them is to be found in asking another question,—suppose Herod the king had been Simon's guest, would these reasons have then occurred ? Would there *then* have been no kiss, no water, no ointment ? Our Lord and Saviour needs nothing at our hands : *every beast of the forest is His, His are the cattle upon a thousand hills.* Whatever He accepts at our hands is condescension on His part ; is an honour to us : to honour us, indeed, He so far sets limits to His own Omnipotence, and permits us to serve Him. But if these things be so, He requires of us our very best. When our Lord entered a poor man's house He did not then demand those elegancies of life, which He expected the rich man to provide ; by withholding which the rich man in fact insulted Him, and drew down the gentle but severe rebuke which is implied in the passage before us.

Many men, when they see an action done which tacitly rebukes themselves, instead of seeking to amend their own conduct, discover or invent some charge against him whose conduct in that particular they will not imitate, and yet cannot condemn. So was it with Simon. The poor woman's conduct was a reproof to him. She was indignant when she saw that the customary marks of respect were withheld from the object of her adoration : she must have known, that, in acting as she did, she would expose herself to censure, and all her past sins be brought to notice, but she cared for nothing : she would not see her Benefactor insulted : every thing was sacrificed to the generous impulse ; for Him she was prepared to suffer reproach and to submit to insult. And where, my brethren, is the true Christian who will not sympathize with her ?

Where is the true Christian who does not rejoice to be reproached, to suffer contempt and scorn from men, when labouring in his Master's cause and service? She was indeed thought scorn of by Simon,—and though Simon only spake within himself, yet the Searcher of Hearts was at his side, and his attention was called from the sins of the woman to his own sin: our Lord pointed out to him the real cause of that neglect which he had evinced towards Him, even the fact that he loved little. “Simon,” said our Lord, “*I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on. There was a certain creditor which had two debtors, the one owed him five hundred pence, the other fifty; and when they had nothing to pay he frankly forgave them both; tell me therefore which of them will love him most. Simon answered and said, I suppose that he to whom he forgave most, and He said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged.*”

How affecting are our Lord's words as He turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, “*Seest thou this woman? I entered thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet, but she hath washed my feet with tears and wiped them with the hairs of her head; thou gavest me no kiss; but this woman since the time I came in, hath not ceased to kiss my feet. Mine head with oil thou didst not anoint; but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment; wherefore I say unto thee, her sins which are many are forgiven, for she loved much; but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.*”

She loved much; and the cause of her love to our Lord, must have been, as I have said before, the mercy she had experienced from Him, when those around, like Simon in the present instance, had been severe in their judgments, and harsh in their conduct. She had been healed of her infirmities, and, if she were Mary Magdalene, seven devils had been cast out of her. She saw the Lord in the flesh; she believed that Man of Sorrows to be, in

## SHE LOVED MUCH.

very deed, the Messiah; she knew Him to be the greatest Benefactor her poor sinful soul ever had; and she loved Him much. She saw Him despised when not openly rejected, and she loved Him more; she reflected with horror on her past sins, and this only increased her adoring love towards Him who pardoned and pitied her, and empowered her to pursue the path of godliness for the time to come. She loved much. Now, my brethren, as to ourselves, we indeed cannot have more cause for love to our Redeemer than this poor loving penitent; for we have all of us the same cause, being all poor sinful, perishing creatures, meriting damnation, and rescued solely as from the penalty, so also from the dominion of sin, by His mediation. But she knew not at this time what is known to us all, what our Divine Saviour had to endure in order that His mediation might be efficacious; she knew not, as we do, the wondrous scheme of Redeeming Love: with the nature of those benefits which He hath procured for us we are better acquainted; and we, too, know the price which, in obtaining these good gifts, the Holy Jesus had to pay. And, my brethren, ought we not to love as she did? Ought we not to love Him as much? Ought we not to love Him more?

This is a question often asked by those who are in earnest; and how frequently their consciences give an unfavourable reply, we, the ministers of the Gospel, are witnesses; for on no one subject are people more inclined to open their grief to us than on this, that they do not experience all that love, that devoted enthusiastic love to Jesus which their hearts tell them to be due to a God who hath endured so much for us.

Now the love of God is a gift and grace that cometh from God; it must be asked for in prayer, and must be shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost. But God the Holy Ghost requires us, while we attribute all grace to Him, to have recourse at all times to the means appointed for obtaining the particular grace that we desire.

## SHE LOVED MUCH.

And it is often from our not resorting to the means appointed for obtaining this blessing, that we fail to secure it. Have we had recourse to these means? Let us see.

*Thou hast judged rightly*, said our Lord, when Simon answered that he to whom most has been forgiven will love most: but, in order to guard against that miserable and diabolical conclusion, *The greater the sinner the greater the saint*, we must here remark that the allusion is to one who not only *has* been forgiven, but *knows* that he has been forgiven. A man may have had much forgiven and not know it; does that man of necessity love much? Let us take an example. Let us suppose an officer sent to arrest us for a debt which we had entirely forgotten, or of which we knew not the existence, a debt, we will say, occasioned by our having become incautiously security for another; a friend meeting the officer on his way, and being unwilling to have us disturbed for a debt so contracted, discharges the account, and we remain unmolested, but entirely ignorant of the obligation we have thus incurred: is there at that time any accession of our love towards our generous friend? No,—but when we are looking carefully into our affairs, and perceive that we have incurred this liability, and then inquire into the reason why the payment of the debt had not been demanded, and upon this are told of the kind intervention of our unknown friend,—then how is our love towards him increased? then how deep is our gratitude for his unmerited kindness? You see, then, my brethren, the necessity of strict self-examination as one of the means to be regularly adopted, if we would love much. When we consider that each sin is in its own nature damnable, (however trivial the world may deem it,) and examine our conduct, we shall soon see how much there is for which we need forgiveness: we may know of sins committed by others greater in magnitude than any of which we are guilty ourselves,—but when we come to the *number* of our sins, we must each account our-

selves the chief of sinners : as to the number of our sins, —each deadly, except for the Advocate we have with the Father,—we have more to state against ourselves than against any one else ; we feel that we are the chief of sinners : we feel that we have cause to love much.

Such is the course of those who are in a state of sanctification, always rejoicing, always loving, always sorrowful and increasing in penitential fervour. The careless man, and it is the careless man whom Simon represents, loves little. Why ? because perfectly contented with himself he knows not what sin is : he knows not how much he needs forgiveness ; without examining his conduct minutely, he is satisfied with his general integrity, with being better than ordinary men in his station in life, and applauded by the world, he loveth little, if he loveth at all. A true Christian on the contrary, by constant recourse to minute self-examination, by scrutinizing every thought, word, act, and motive, is continually ascertaining the amount of that debt for which he needs forgiveness, and for which his pardon has been obtained. On this account it is that saints are always the deepest penitents ; this it is which accounts for that, which to the worldly and the careless is perplexing, the deep penitential sorrows of saints : they may have committed no great and heinous offences ; they may have continued from the day when they were first brought to the font under grace ; but they are thoroughly acquainted with the nature of sin, the slightest infraction of the Divine Law by the creature ; they know the deadly nature of all sin ; of our very infirmities, the slightest sin of thought, however speedily checked : they know that for every sin of theirs, however slight in the world's estimation, their God shed His blood : over their negligencies and ignorances therefore, they continually weep, not because they are to them any longer destructive, but because, though blotted out, they added to the sorrows of Gethsemane, and to the sufferings of Calvary : they are ever finding fresh cause for love, by detecting in

themselves, through self-examination, stains of sin of which they were once even ignorant, but which were only wiped away by the Blood of the Lamb.

Yes, my brethren, the saint is ever penitent and loving, because, though he may not have committed great sins, he knows that, insignificant as each grain of sand is in itself, the ship may be sunk by a weight of sand not less than by a weight of lead.

You perceive, then, that the first thing to be done, if we would encourage in our hearts the principle of love, is to be very diligent in self-examination. But it may be said that the result of self-examination is often hatred of self, not love to Christ. And it may be so, for to self-examination a habit of meditation must be added. We are to examine ourselves as to our conduct and our motives, but we must also look out of ourselves. By scrutinizing their feelings, and deploring the insensibility of their hearts, men only bring themselves into a morbid state, injurious to themselves, and unprofitable to all around them. What is the course which you would ordinarily pursue, if any time you are not moved by the facts of Redemption as you ought to be? What is the course pursued in the ordinary concerns of life? A dear friend is taken dangerously ill,—how is it that you act in this case? Do you go straightway to your closet, and there examine the state of your feelings, whether you feel precisely the degree of grief which you think to befit the occasion? Do you bewail your insensibility? No, what you do is to hasten to the sick bed of the sufferer; you see him writhing with pain; you hear him expressing his gratitude to those around him and his trust in God: you behold his kind look directed to yourself, and expressive of more than words could utter,—and to your feelings you give way in that manner and to that degree which is natural to you. Or if you are unable to attend the sick bed; your imagination immediately presents to your mind all

## SHE LOVED MUCH.

the facts of the case, all the past acts of kindness evinced towards you by your friend; and his present sufferings, into which you can the more deeply enter, because, from your knowledge of his character, you are quite certain how he will feel,—how even to you, in the midst of his pain, his thoughts will advert; and you weep, not because you ought, but because you must, because you cannot help it. But still further. You are sorry for the sufferings of an *acquaintance* whom you respect; but this is very different from the feelings elicited when we know of the sorrows of one who has opened to us his grief, and who is the object of our love. The woman under consideration did not stand apart to examine her heart, and to ascertain whether her love for her Divine Benefactor was sufficiently fervent: she thought not of herself, but of Him; she knew that though she loved much she ought still to love more, and she followed Him and watched Him, and heard Him speak as never man spake, and beheld all the wondrous works of mercy which He wrought; and by so doing her love increased, and she sought every little occasion to evince her love, not from a sense of duty, but because, when we really love, our greatest pleasure is to do what we think will be well pleasing to the object of our devotion and gratitude.

Thus you see what steps we must take, if we would cultivate the feeling of love to God, and those other feelings which are akin to it. We must realize to the mind the awful facts in which we are so nearly, so deeply, nay, eternally concerned: and how? How but by meditation? It is by solemn and prayerful meditation on the facts of the Gospel, and upon all that relates to our Incarnate God, so as to realize to our minds all that He once endured, or is now accomplishing for us, that we are to kindle our affections and inflame our love; and it is to a neglect of this duty of meditation, that, (if we do not love the Saviour,) our want of love is to be traced. The Gospels are read by the careless, merely

as they read a history of great events : they see not with the mind's eye the very things that were done, the blood drops at Gethsemane, the tortures of Golgotha. It is by meditation that we bring these facts vividly before our souls, that we place ourselves by our sorrowing Saviour's side, or with St. John we recline on His bosom, or like Mary, sit at His feet ; it is through meditation that the Holy Spirit writes these realities upon the tablets of our hearts, and it is through meditation that the true Christian, knowing more and more of his Saviour's sufferings, is taught more and more to love Him.

For this very purpose it is, that the facts relating to the sufferings of the Blessed Jesus, our only Lord and Saviour, are by the Holy Spirit so minutely described ; for this very purpose that the Man of Sorrows, when most acquainted with grief is exposed, as it were, to the gaze of His brethren : for this very purpose that we are permitted to see Him sorrowful and very heavy, seeking the sympathy of His disciples, but finding none ; (their eyes being oppressed with sleep, as if to teach us that the last poor comfort which human nature seeks in its sufferings, the sympathy of friends, was, of purpose withheld from Him whose agony was so intense that He sweat as it were great drops of blood ;) yes, being in an agony, He prayed more earnestly ; and His sweat was, as it were, great drops of blood falling to the ground.

My brethren,—it is that we may meditate upon the facts, until we realize them to the mind, that we are told of His head crowned with thorns, and of His ears being pierced with revilings, and of His back furrowed with the scourge, and of His face defiled with spitting, and of His neck burdened with the cross, and of His hands and feet pierced with nails, and of His being crucified between malefactors, and of His loud cry, Eloi, Eloi lama Sabacthani.

Can you meditate on these things until you have actually realized them without having your feelings moved ?



## SHE LOVED MUCH.

The poor woman in our text was moved with pity when she saw our God going about a homeless wanderer, rejected and despised,—and shall not we be moved, when we know these additional facts, at that time unknown to her.

But we can pity a suffering *stranger*; pity only becomes love when we are ourselves connected with the suffering person: and therefore meditation must not stop here. We must look upon the sufferer with the mind's eye; until tears flow down our cheeks, but we must not take off our eyes until we see in Him, our God: the sufferer is indeed perfect Man, but in that one Divine Person there are two Natures, and He is also perfect God: the natures are two, but the Person is one, and the suffering Person is none other but one God. *He is our God, even the God of whom cometh Salvation, God is the Lord by whom we escape death.\** When suffering as man, He did not cease to be God; when acting as God, He did not cease to be man; the two natures were in Him inseparably united, and are so still; *although He be God and Man, yet He is not two but one Christ.* Mark, then, my brethren, what must have been the cause, at least, a principal cause of that bloody agony, that mental suffering so indescribably great; He who suffered, being God as well as Man, to Him all things must at all times be present:—past, present, and future are to God, all apparent at once: in Him is no succession of ideas: He is an Eternal Now, an Everlasting I AM. He seeth as distinctly the things that are not, as the things that are; *He calleth the things which be not, as though they were.*—(Romans iv. 17.)

It is then no figure of speech, when the Christian, thinking of the Divine sufferer, saith, “My sins were the burden of His soul in the garden; my sins were the heavy scourge upon His back, and the crown of thorns

\* Psalm lxxviii. 20.

upon His head ; my sins were the spikes which affixed Him to the cross, and the spear which pierced Him to the heart :” it is no figure of speech, when the Christian, looking upon the agonized body of his God, exclaims, *I did it*. No. For the human nature of the God-man was agonized, because to Him was known, through His Divine Omniscience, every sin of every man to be born into the world, for which he was then paying the penalty. My penitent brother, mark this ; that sin, that dreadful sin, to which thy upbraiding conscience is even now adverting, that sin was present to thy Saviour’s mind in His agony ; He in the garden saw thee in that hour of darkness, when thou didst think no eye was on thee ; He knew that evil thought when thou didst desire the evil which thou didst fear to accomplish : thou hast repented ; thou hast turned to the Lord—it is well : thou hast been converted,—it is well ; thou hast heard Him say, Thy sins, which are many, are forgiven ; it is well : so said our Lord of the poor woman in our text ; to her he said, *Thy sins are forgiven* : and *she loved much*. Yes, *she* knew not all it cost to obtain the forgiveness thus announced, but she loved much. We do know what tears of blood were shed for each offence of ours ; we know of Calvary,—the cross,—the passion,—and shall we love little ?

Well indeed would it be, if, following the suggestion of the Church, we would devote one day in each week, even that day, Friday, on which the great atoning sacrifice was offered, to special meditation on that awful event, when God shed His blood for us, and so prevented our own death from becoming of necessity the gate to everlasting misery. Every day should this awful fact occupy our thoughts ; but as one day in each year, so one day in each week, and one hour in each day, should be devoted to exclusive thought on this fact ; for what is not done systematically will always be done imperfectly.

## SHE LOVED MUCH.

And now let us proceed to ask,—when, through the blessing of the Holy Ghost upon our self-examination and meditation, our hearts are glowing with love to God, how is that love to be evinced? And to answer this question, let us be permitted to ask another: How is it that we evince our love to a superior in this world? Undoubtedly our superior will withdraw from us his love and his confidence, if we do not with zeal and diligence discharge the duties which devolve upon us in any office to which he may have appointed us; nor will he, under such circumstances, condescend to receive any favour at our hands: but it is also undoubtedly true that a man may discharge diligently the duties of an office, may conduct himself properly towards a superior in office, not from love or respect to that superior, but from various other, and some of them merely selfish, motives. Although, therefore, a superior will not believe that an inferior whom he has benefited really loves him, unless he discharges properly the duties devolving upon him, he cannot conclude, from the mere performance of prescribed duties, that the actuating motive is love and gratitude; but he *does* argue the existence of love and gratitude when he sees the inferior, without neglecting his greater duties, looking out for every opportunity to do what will please him in various little unimportant particulars; particulars too unimportant to be made a subject of command; nor will he reject the little presents which the inferior may sometimes offer to him, not in the presumption that he can benefit his benefactor, but from the earnest wish of shewing that benefactor that he is not unmindful of his favours, that inexpressible desire of manifesting gratitude which a grateful heart experiences. The love of a dutiful inferior is always shewn by little attentions. And this feeling our greatest Benefactor, our Lord our Saviour and our God, would have us cherish in our hearts—He *commands* us, as our Lord and *Master*, as to

## SHE LOVED MUCH.

the weightier things of the Law; but while he would dismiss us from His service, if we were to leave these things undone,—He accepts at our hands the tithe we offer of the mint and cummin.

The sum of Christian life is made up of little duties, as well as of the mortification of little sins: he is not a true Christian who despises little things, the minor duties. It is but once in a life-time, if so much, that we can save the life of a friend by the sacrifice of our own, but every day we may make a dear friend happy by little, scarcely observable attentions: it is only the rich man who can build a Church at his own expense, but the very pauper may contribute to its decoration, if not coldly repulsed by the supercilious. The Church, when wisely administered, will provide for opportunities in which the loving heart of the poor man, as well as of the rich, may exercise itself in little acts of devotion and love: and most unwise is the administration of the Church, when these indications of the natural impulses of our nature are coldly repulsed: when proud men in high places bid the loving heart, which delights in little acts, even in points of ceremony, to give vent to its feelings,—to betake itself to the methodist or the papist, as being too enthusiastic or too superstitious for the dignity of an establishment, which is a blessing, and only so far a blessing, as it meets the spiritual exigencies of the children of God.

Be sure of this,—the same feelings which actuated the poor penitent before us, are to actuate us all, till the end of time. Christianity is not a cold system of morals; it is not a stiff form of doctrine; it is not a mere confession of faith or protest against error: true Christianity consists in devotion to a Person; a desire to do every thing our hand findeth to do, whether it be great or whether it be small, which we think will be well-pleasing to that one Person whom we adore: an endeavour to do all that in us lies to promote the glory and further the

## SHE LOVED MUCH.

cause among men of that adored Person, though He is too exalted to be benefited by our puny efforts; that adored and worshipped Person being Jesus Christ, the God-man, who died for our sins, and rose again for our justification. Do you look to the Church, (considered as the mystical body of which Christ is the head, the aggregate of all believers incorporated by Baptism into one society, and grafted into Christ,) do you seek to benefit it, do you seek to promote its interests, not from sectarian feeling, not with feelings of a politician, God forbid, who regards it only as spiritual police, but because it is the Spouse of Christ, the Saviour you adore? Or do you regard the material fabric of the Church as a house of prayer? you see in it more than a mere house of prayer, (though this it is,) you reverence it as the palace of your heavenly and adorable King, and you observe with pleasure the decent ceremonials which the officers of the celestial palace have appointed, and seek, by the decencies of the sanctuary, to evince your love to Him who is the Lord of the sanctuary, and whose feet, were He on earth, you would rejoice to wash. Or do you look to the poor,—when you relieve the poor, while the eye of the flesh looks upon the suffering pauper, the eye of faith sees him to be the representative of Him who for our sakes became poor indeed, and the ear of faith hears with joy the assertion, what thou doest unto these thou doest unto Me. You go to the Holy Eucharist—do you go to obtain grace? Oh, cold expression! you do indeed go to receive grace, but you go for the special purpose of meeting that sacred Person whom you adore, where He is specially, though mysteriously, present; you go by faith to become more nearly united with Him,—you go, that by His Spirit, the Person you worship, serve, love, with love indescribable, may impart Himself to your soul, and you dwell in Him, and He in you.

Yes, our Lord permits our personal love to Him thus to enter into every religious act, and whether we eat or

## SHE LOVED MUCH.

whether we drink, or whatsoever we do, if we really love Him we have an opportunity of evincing our love. Then shall ye know that ye are Christ's disciples indeed and in truth, when ye *love much*: and oh! how joyful will be the sound, at the last day, when we hear the Saviour, as He places us on the right hand, say, "*Their sins which are many are forgiven, for they loved much.*"

## S E R M O N    I I.

MAT. IX. 20.

“ The Hem of His Garment.”

THE fact to which our text refers may be narrated best by comparing the statements of St. Mark and St. Luke, with the more concise narrative of St. Matthew. A certain woman which was diseased, having had an issue of blood for twelve years, when she heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and touched the hem of His garment; for she said within herself, “ if I can but touch the hem of His garment I shall be whole;” and immediately the issue of her blood was stanchèd; and Jesus knowing in Himself that virtue had gone out of Him, turned Him about in the press, and said, Who touched My clothes? And when all denied, Jesus said, Somebody hath touchèd me, for I perceive that virtue hath gone out of me; and He looked round about upon her who had done this thing, and when she stood trembling before Him, He said unto her, Daughter, be of good comfort, thy Faith hath made thee whole.

There seems to have been at all times a mysterious connection between faith on the part of an applicant for mercy, and the bestowal of a blessing by our Lord. In this very chapter we find that, before the miracle was wrought upon the daughter of Jairus, our Blessed Lord enquired, Believe ye that I am able to do this? To the woman of Canaan he said, ‘ O woman, great is thy faith, be it unto thee even as thou wilt:’ When he cured the paralytic, He did so, ‘ seeing the *faith* of those who let him down through the roof.’ Nay further, we are told that, because of their unbelief, in His own country He

did not many mighty works ; or stronger still, He *could* do there no mighty works, save that He laid His hands upon a few sick folk and healed them. In that the Lord Jesus is God, very God of very God, to Him all things were then, as they are now, possible, but in that he was not God only, but man also, even the God-man ; to Him as Christ, things were only possible according to that scheme of mercy devised and ordained by the three Blessed Persons of the Holy Trinity ; and, as the God-man, He could only act when there existed faith on the part of those who appealed to His mercy. And it was so with respect also to the miracles wrought by the hands of the Apostles ; before the miracle could be effected, faith in the Lord Jesus was required : the cripple at Lystra was not cured by St. Paul, until the Apostle perceived that he had faith to be healed ; and when the lame man at the beautiful gate of the Temple was made strong, it was through faith in the name of Jesus.

We do not pretend to account for this : we merely mention it as an indisputable fact. The fact has been made known to us by God : what He reveals, we receive, and, [without questioning,] act upon it. And as it was with respect to these visible miracles wrought by our Lord upon the bodies of men,—so is it with respect to those miracles which He still works, through His Spirit, upon our souls, when He regenerates them, and sanctifies them, and turns the sinner's heart of stone into a heart of flesh : without faith we can obtain no spiritual gift ; we are the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ ; we are kept by the power of God through faith ; it is by faith we are justified, by faith we are saved.

But here comes the question, What kind of Faith is this which is thus so needful ? And in order to answer this we must bear in mind, that though in one sense it is true that Faith will save us, yet it can only save us by bringing us to Christ, since the Lord Jesus Christ, and He only, is the Saviour of men. We may not rest upon



## HIS GARMENT.

our Faith, then, any more than upon our Works : though Faith be that qualification within us which is necessary to render us susceptible of grace, we may not say, I believe that I am saved, and therefore I *am* saved : Did the poor woman, in our text, content herself with saying, I believe that Jesus can cure me, and therefore I *am* cured ; I believe that He will make me whole, and therefore I am made whole ? No, if such had been her Faith, her Faith would never have saved her. Her Faith saved her because it impelled her to seek the only Saviour : her Faith saved her, because it induced her to overcome all obstacles in order to touch Him from whom only, and not from her Faith, the virtue went out which effected her cure : she believed that the Lord Jesus had power to heal her ; but healed she was not, until she touched the hem of His garment.

How astonished must the infidel be when he peruses this narrative. When the poor woman heard of Jesus, she came in the press behind and touched the hem of His garment, and, saith the Holy Ghost, immediately, that is, on touching the hem of His garment, not before, though her Faith preceded her action,—on touching the hem of His garment, immediately the issue of blood was staunched. The infidel will, of course, apply here the arguments he makes use of to disparage the doctrine of the Sacraments as held in the Christian Church. ‘ What superstition,’ he will say—‘ can it really be believed that the act of touching the hem of a garment, the act of bringing herself into contact with a little woollen cloth, could effect a cure upon this poor woman ! She ought to have been repulsed at once !’ But, my brethren, by Christ our God, the poor woman remained unrebuked. Though she had Faith before she touched the hem of the garment, it was not till she came in contact with it that her cure was effected. She touched the hem of the garment, and then straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up : she touched the hem of His gar-

## THE HEM OF

ment, and then,—to add to the mystery, Jesus immediately, the very moment that she touched Him, knew in Himself that virtue, a Divine gift, had gone out of Him, the God-man: she touched the hem of His garment, and when the poor faithful penitent stood trembling before Him, the voice of her God Incarnate was heard, instead of upbraiding her for superstition, speaking to her in words of kindness, and saying, Daughter, be of good comfort, thy Faith, even that Faith which prompted thee to touch the hem of My garment, hath made thee whole.

Now here you perceive that two things went together, an inward act of Faith and recourse to something external, both the internal and the external bearing upon Christ,—she touched the hem of His garment: our Lord in all His miracles required a susceptibility on the part of the applicant for His mercy, and an outward action as regarded Himself: he required faith on the part of the person seeking His aid, and then He touched that person, or spake certain words to him, or anointed his eyes with clay, or bid him have recourse to some action insignificant in itself, or, as in the case before us, He still more strongly enforced the connexion between the faith within and the external act, by His condescending kindness to her who had touched the hem of His garment. The two acts were combined, the inward and the outward; not one without the other, but both together. And so, (according to a usual mode of speech when two causes conspire to produce one effect,) we find the Holy Ghost ascribing the poor woman's case to the fact that she touched our Lord; "Straightway," that is, on her touching the hem of His garment, "the fountain of her blood dried up;" while on the other hand our Blessed Lord cheered her heart by declaring, "Daughter, be of good comfort, thy faith hath made thee whole!"

And so was it in things spiritual: when St. Peter addressed certain persons who were already believers,

## HIS GARMENT.

what did he say? Your belief is sufficient? It is superstitious to suppose that any efficacy is attached to a mere form or ceremony?—to believe that any inward and spiritual grace can be conveyed by an outward and visible sign? No, his exhortation to those believers was, Repent and be baptized: let your faith bring you to Christ: but Christ is no longer visible, how are you then to approach Him? He has appointed the means in the Sacrament of Baptism: here is the hem of His garment, touch it and be healed, all ye who have upon you the deadly disease of sin. They believed, they were baptized, they touched the hem of their Saviour's garment, and they were healed. When St. Paul had told the Jailor of Philippi that to be saved he must believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, he did not consider his belief sufficient, but the Jailor was baptized, he and all his, straightway: he believed, and, like the poor woman before us, touched the hem of His Saviour's garment. And when our Blessed Lord, as we read in the sixth chapter of St. John, had declared Himself to be "The Bread which cometh down from Heaven," the spiritual sustenance of the soul, when He declared, "Except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His Blood, ye have no life in you;" "He that eateth My Flesh, and drinketh My Blood, dwelleth in Me, and I in him;" He did not rest there, but soon after appointed the outward means through which the Blessing might be applied to each penitent and faithful soul, the Blessing of a spiritual union with the God-man, the only Mediator, and through Him, God as well as man, with God Himself, in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. "The cup of Blessing which we bless," saith the Holy Ghost, speaking through St. Paul, in the tenth chapter of the first Epistle to the Corinthians, "is it not the Communion of the Blood of Christ, the Bread which we break, is it not the Communion of the Body of Christ?" These are the outward means, not distinct from, but in conjunction with, faith,

## THE HEM OF

by which those who hunger and thirst after Righteousness, even Christ Himself, who “is made unto us Wisdom and Righteousness, and Sanctification and Redemption;” may have their souls satisfied. These are still the two things required, ere the Gift be conferred, and the Grace wrought upon the soul; subjectively, the Faith which exists in a penitent’s heart; objectively, the outward sign of the Sacrament; the inward susceptibility of the soul, and the hem of the garment through which the virtue passes from Him, who alone hath power to save and to edify.

Thus hath our Lord applied to things spiritual, for our spiritual consolation and assurance, a principle upon which men act in the affairs of this world. A man who has served his country, and is assured of the good will of his Sovereign towards him, although he may be aware that it is the Sovereign’s intention to confer upon him a pension or a peerage, is neither a pensioner nor a peer, until the little ceremony has been gone through of attaching to the patent the few little letters which comprise the Sovereign’s name: then, but not till then, he is gifted with that for which he was only qualified before; a man who has purchased an estate, and even paid the money, is not in possession of the estate until the little ceremony is performed of consigning to him certain pieces of parchment styled the title deeds.

Ill, then, does it become those to scoff who, in their transactions with one another, thus know the value of forms and signs, when signs and forms are appointed under the Gospel as pledges to assure men whose souls are already prepared by faith, that the spiritual Gift they desire, and which has been promised to them, is actually consigned to them by Him who is the Giver of all good Things. The Sacraments of the Gospel and the ordinances of the Church are thus ordained as means of extending to the Penitent and Faithful, when seeking Pardon or Grace, the hem of the Saviour’s garment.

## HIS GARMENT.

It is not superstition, then, for faithful men thus to use and to rely upon the ordinances of the Christian religion: there is no superstition in having recourse to actions between which and their results there is no discernible connection, if those actions be either enjoined or sanctioned by God. For a man, without any promise from God, though his prophet, to have washed in the Jordan seven times, expecting to be cured of his leprosy, would have been superstition. Considered in themselves the waters of Abana and Parphar were better than, or certainly as good, as all the waters of Israel: but it ceased to be superstitious, it became a religious act, when, relying on the Divine promise, Naaman the Syrian had recourse to the action prescribed to him:—his leprosy left him. The waters of Jordan were to the Syrian leper, as to the poor woman before us the hem of her Saviour's garment. It would not be superstition for a man sick of the palsy to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land in expectation of a cure, *if* the Lord God had commanded him to do so, and had promised his restoration to health as the reward of his obedience; but to do such a thing, or any similar thing, *without* a promise, *this* would be superstitious. So you will observe the superstitious property in an act consists not in having recourse to means apparently inefficacious, but in having recourse to them without a sufficient warrant from reason or from Revelation. It is through things external that many of the gifts and graces which we expect to realize in the Christian Church are to pass from Christ, from whom alone the virtue emanates, to our souls. And the only question is, what *are* the external things to which we are to resort? It is not a question whether faithful men touching the hem of their Saviour's garment will receive a Blessing, but how shall we in these days know for certain what the hem of the garment is.

A heathen man being converted, comes to Holy Baptism. Is that superstition? The infidel asks, What can

the affusion of a little water with a certain form of words avail? The convert answers, I am a sinful man, and to be cured of the leprosy of sin, I touch the hem of my Saviour's garment. Or, being Christians yourselves, you exercise your Christian privilege and bring your little one to be baptized. You do so, because you believe in the doctrine of original sin, and because the Scripture teaches that they who are baptized into Christ have put on Christ,—you do so, because our merciful Saviour most lovingly inviteth us to bring our little ones to Him, saying, Suffer little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not; and there are no other means, except Holy Baptism, through which they can be brought unto Him; you do so, because you perceive how the faith of Jairus was accepted and brought Christ to his child; you do so because you remember that when the sick of the palsy lay helpless as a little child he was brought to Jesus by the faith of his friends, and Jesus seeing *their* Faith blessed him: your Faith, or the Faith of our common mother the Church, brings your little children to Christ; we cause them to touch the hem of our Saviour's garment, and he who was born a child of wrath, becomes, as the Catechism teaches us, a member of Christ, a child of God, an inheritor of the kingdom of Heaven.

But though the poor woman before us was healed of her disorder, it did not follow, if she neglected the care of her health, that she would not fall into other and worse and more fatal diseases; it did not follow that because Jairus's daughter was raised from the dead, she should not die again. From grace given we may fall, and fall finally, and grace may be bestowed and yet not used. Although, that, by bringing our child to Christ, we rescue him from the curse of that original sin under which he was born: he may fall into other sins which may in their nature be equally deadly, and which will plunge him into everlasting ruin, unless he repent betimes. And when he does repent, when he does sorrow

## HIS GARMENT.

for past sin with all his heart and soul, yet how does he *know* that his sins are pardoned? what pledge has he to assure him thereof? I speak to real penitents, and they know how agonizing to the soul that doubt is; but do you truly repent and unfeignedly believe the Holy Gospel? then each day of your life you may attend at Church, and hear one who hath power and commandment given unto him by God to declare and pronounce to his people, being penitent, and therefore unto *you*, the absolution and remission of your sins, you may hear him declare in God's name that by God you are pardoned and absolved. Oh! the blessing to faithful and penitent hearts, day by day to have this assurance given unto them, as, advancing day by day in love to their Saviour and their God, their abhorrence of sin, and consequently their repentance becomes more acute. With still stronger sensations of gratitude, do they receive similar words of comfort when they draw near to their Lord in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper; for the words of the absolution there, are to them as the words of our Lord to the woman before us, when she touched the hem of His garment, Be of good comfort, thy Faith hath made thee whole.

It is on this principle that you bring young persons to the Bishop to be confirmed, that is, to receive strengthening grace at the period of life when they are most exposed to the assaults of the world, the flesh, and the devil: and you come here yourselves, they and you together, to worship God the Blessed Trinity under an appointed form; and when you take one another for better and for worse in holy matrimony, you come here expecting to obtain a blessing upon your union; and when you are sick you ask for the prayers of the Church, confiding on their efficacy; in short, to all the various offices and ordinances of the Church you have recourse, as from time to time you need them, under the various and varying circumstances of life. And is this superstition? No, because Christ, the head of the Church, though appointing only

## THE HEM OF

two sacraments as generally necessary for salvation, has nevertheless left power in His Church to appoint various ordinances as means of grace, and to repeal them, if their abolition be expedient. He said to His Apostles, and by implication to their successors, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven,—ye, the constituted authorities of the kingdom of God upon earth. The Holy Ghost still abideth in the Church as the Comforter, and we expect Him to act through those ordinances which He inspires the ecclesiastical authorities to appoint. The ordinances thus duly ordained become to us the hem of the Saviour's garment, as from time to time we seek Him to realize the blessings which from time to time we require.

Before the blessed Reformation of our own Church, there existed ordinances in the Church of England similar to many still retained in foreign churches, which at the Reformation were abolished by those who had authority in the Church to do so, the Clergy in Convocation acting with the laity in Parliament, and under the sanction of the Sovereign. Such for example as using holy water upon entering a church, and a vast variety of observances which had degenerated into mere forms, and were to the soul as rivers which overflow without fertilizing the soil. Now it *would* be superstition for us to observe any of these ordinances or ceremonies which were then prohibited, expecting spiritual good to result from the observance; and why? Even because by the proper authorities, who have power to loose as well as to bind, they have been abolished, and we should be as a leprous man washing in the Jordan and expecting to be cured, although to him no promise had been made that upon his so doing a cure would be effected; we should be seeking through an outward observance what from that observance we have no right from reason and Revelation to expect; we should be resorting to a mere charm; we might indeed be



## HIS GARMENT.

touching the hem of a garment, but it would not be the garment of our Lord.

And here you see the wisdom of that common saying among the true and faithful sons of the Church of England in these unsettled times, I stand by the Prayer-Book. We are marked for taking this decided line by both the extremes, to which those who stand in the middle way are opposed: but, when we say this, we mean, that we do expect to derive spiritual advantage from a due attendance upon those ordinances appointed *by* authority; but from ordinances not thus authorized we may not, and we will not, look for grace; for the Lord's presence is absent from *them*; and the authority to which we, as members of the Anglican Church, must defer, is that of the Church of England, and for the expression of her authority we look to the Book of Common Prayer. We desire to touch the hem of our Saviour's garment; but what the garment of our Saviour is, we suffer the Church to point out to us.

On this point it has been necessary to dwell, because, in order to realize the blessings which may be expected to result from a strict observance of the ordinances of the Gospel, we must be fully persuaded in our minds. I have stated that according to the order of things which God hath appointed in His Church, before a gift will be conveyed, there must be faith on the part of the recipient; there is a mysterious and close connection between Faith and our reception of any Divine Blessing. But faith is special as well as general; bearing not only on Revelation as a whole, but on the application of particular Blessings to ourselves individually. A man may be, speaking generally, a Believer; he may be fully persuaded of the truth of Christianity, and may deny none of the articles of the Christian Faith, and yet, for want of Faith on certain particular points, he may deprive himself of certain benefits which he might otherwise realize, and which are

## THE HEM OF

vouchsafed to others who, seeking them through Faith in the appointed means, find it done unto them even as they believe. It was not sufficient for Naaman the Syrian to believe that the Prophet of Israel could effect his cure, his cure was not effected until he believed the efficacy attached to the washing in the Jordan.

Speaking of Faith in its general nature, as possessed by all who are fully persuaded of the truth of Revelation, and of the principal doctrines of our religion, we may at once conclude that it may be predicted of all here present: you would hardly be present here without it. You all believe in God and His Only Begotten Son Jesus Christ our Lord, and the other articles of the Creed: You believe that God's promises are very precious, and your Faith in His promises and in His threatenings, preserves you from deliberate sin, and the commission of the more heinous offences. So far it is well. But neither in faith nor in works may we remain stationary. We must keep on improving. And let me ask, was *this* the Faith of the poor woman before us? Was this the Faith commended by our Lord in her? Her Faith was not only that the Lord Jesus was the Messiah, but that being the Messiah, He could and would heal her infirmity: this was the Faith that led her on to touch the hem of His garment. And precisely so was it with respect to the other miracles of our Lord. We are told that on one occasion two blind men followed Him, crying and saying, Thou Son of David, have mercy on us. They knew Him to be the Son of David; they addressed Him as the Messiah; they appealed to Him as to one who could work miracles. But what said our Lord? Did He declare this general Faith to be sufficient? No; His question to them had reference to the special act which He was asked to perform. Believe ye that I am able to do *this*? and then when, answering in the affirmative, they said, Yea Lord, then He touched their eyes, saying, According to your Faith be it unto you.

## HIS GARMENT.

And because of their Faith, on His touching their eyes, an action corresponding to that of the poor woman's, in touching the hem of His garment, because of their Faith their eyes were opened; the virtue went out of Him.

Take another example, the miracle wrought on the Centurion's servant. When our Lord was in Capernaum there came unto Him a Centurion, beseeching Him and saying, that his servant lay at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented. And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him. You will remember that the Centurion humbly declined the honour thus offered, as being unworthy, high in office as he was, to receive under his roof, the despised and rejected Man of Sorrows: and, after a blessing upon his Faith generally, our Lord, with reference to the particular case in behalf of which the application had been made, said unto the Centurion, Go thy way, and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee. The Centurion did believe, and his servant was healed in the self-same hour. He believed what? That the Man of Sorrows was the Messiah mighty in word and in deed! the Wonderful, the Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace, according to the prophecy of Isaiah? This he did, of course, believe, or our Lord would not have said, with reference to his Faith, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great Faith, no not in Israel. This he did believe, or unto the Lord Jesus he would not have come. But although this general Faith would have been a blessing to his soul, although he would himself have been benefited thereby; this alone would not have secured the special blessing which he now asked; this would not have effected his servant's cure; this blessing he obtained as a reward to his special Faith, to his belief that as our Lord promised in this particular instance, so in this particular instance that promise would be fulfilled. Here, too, we find the same principle with regard to Faith, to

## THE HEM OF

which allusion was made at the commencement of this discourse: the Faith of the Centurion was not inoperative; he did not remain in his house and say, Because I believe, *therefore* my servant will be healed; but he came to Christ and besought Him. And when was the servant healed? in the self-same hour that Jesus spake unto the Centurion. The virtue in this instance went out of our Lord, as His mouth uttered certain words,—then, but not till then; even as the poor woman's cure was not effected until that precise moment of time when she touched the hem of His garment. Just as even now, though *prepared* to be blessed, we are not *actually* blessed, until the time comes when, by the authority of Christ, a blessing is pronounced by the Church, upon all whose hearts are qualified by Faith to receive it.

We have another very remarkable instance of the necessity of special Faith in order to obtain a special Blessing, from what occurred to the man whose son was lunatic, who met our Lord on His coming down from the Mount of Transfiguration. I brought him, he said, to Thy disciples and they could not cure him,—and why? The answer is implied in our Lord's exclamation, O faithless and perverse generation! Speaking generally the disciples were *not* faithless: they followed the Lord Jesus believing Him to be the Messiah: but when applied to in order that they might effect a cure in this particular instance, they had not that faith in the powers promised to them by their Master, and for want of this faith, in this case, they, in this case, failed.

This principle is laid down by the Church in reference to spiritual blessings, when, in answer to the question, What is required of persons to be baptized, the Catechism teaches us to reply, Repentance, whereby we forsake sin, and Faith:——What Faith? Faith in the Lord Jesus? Faith in the articles of the Creed? Undoubtedly, except on the strength of this Faith, a converted person would not come to Baptism at all, nor, in

## HIS GARMENT.

the case of infants, should we, except in this Faith, bring them to the Font. This is explained, but to qualify men for this Sacrament a special Faith is required. "Faith," says the Catechism, "whereby they stedfastly believe the promises of God made to them in that Sacrament." Who knows, my brethren, but that the cause why so many fall away in these days from baptismal grace, scarcely giving outward signs of their having received it, —who knows but that the cause may be attributed to the very prevalent infidelity of rationalistic men, as to the promises of God made to us in that Sacrament? Perhaps the little apparent progress made by some who are not infrequent at the Holy Table, but whose conduct is sadly inconsistent with their professions, may, in like manner, be attributed to their want of Faith in not discerning the Lord's Body: the not discerning the Lord's Body being, according to St. Paul, one of the marks of an unworthy communicant. According to your Faith will it be unto you.

So is it with respect to prayer. You pray. But how do you pray? Some persons pray because they recognize in prayer an elevating act of the mind; they use prayer as others use meditation, as a means of enkindling a doctrinal feeling, and, unless their feelings are excited, they imagine that they are incapable of prayer. I ask, then, What is your faith? Do you believe the promises made to praying men by Christ our Lord? "Ask," saith our Lord, "and it shall be given unto you." Ask what? Our adorable Saviour again gives the answer: "All things whatsoever ye ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive." And who may ask,—again, hear the infallible word addressed, of course to the Believing, "Every one that asketh receiveth"—either his actual petition or an equivalent. May we pray for every thing? Yes, for every thing, even the things which are requisite and necessary for the body as well as the soul, for every thing for which we may lawfully labor, and which God

has placed by His providence within our reach, and legitimate desire: "Be careful for nothing," saith the Apostle, "but in every thing by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your request be made known unto God." Doubtless there are many who, from their want of faith in prayer, have lost blessings temporal and spiritual for themselves and for their friends; but they who are men of prayer, and who watch special Providences, can bear testimony to the fact, that their prayers have been often answered in a manner almost miraculous. Not answered immediately, not answered precisely in the manner expected,—for prayer is a work of Faith, and Faith could not be exercised unless the Lord sometimes made as though he heard not, but answered eventually and effectually. If prayer were evidently and immediately answered, men indeed would cease to work, and give themselves up to prayer, instead, as now, ceasing to pray that they may devote themselves to labor. Ye who are men of prayer, know that it is to you according to your Faith: you know that you feel sometimes an irresistible impulse to pray for a particular blessing, and how in these instances it is to you according to your Faith: you also know that there is within you sometimes an unaccountable reluctance to ask God for some particular thing which might otherwise seem to be desirable, and regarding this as the voice of God the Holy Ghost within you, you abstain from prayer, so also from laboring for that thing: prayer sanctifies your labors, and your labors give energy to prayer.

Once more, how many complain of the little progress they make in godliness; of the mighty difference between the holiest Christians now and such as we read of in the Apostolic times: in him who is sanctified the Lord Jesus dwelleth, and through Him, the Mediator, God the Blessed Trinity. "If a man love Me," saith our Lord, (John xiv. 23.) "he will keep My words, and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and

make Our abode in him." And what is the legitimate inference from this? Let St. Paul give the answer: "I can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth me." For want of faith in this supernatural strength, imparted through the indwelling of Christ by His Spirit; for want of faith in the promises which as members of Christ we possess; for want of faith that "Greater is He that is in us than he that is in the world;" for want of faith that His strength is made perfect in our weakness,—how many of those things are not attempted which we are commanded to do? how many duties are omitted? what degenerate Christians we become, living in a luxurious age, scarcely, if at all, to be distinguished from the worldlings around us. Oh! my brethren, magnify your office as Christians! You are a chosen generation, a royal Priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people! Oh! think of what you may accomplish as to your souls when you have the Almighty for your helper; and depend upon it, it will be to you according to your Faith.

My brethren, it is for the sake of your souls that I would most earnestly and affectionately entreat you to think of these things,—and the more you dwell upon the efficacy of Faith, the more clearly will you see the wisdom and the design of God, in compelling us to have recourse to external means, in order to obtain spiritual gifts and divine grace. The tendency of men's minds is to rely on something of their own,—on their works for instance: the sin of relying on any presumed merits of our own is, that it detracts from our sole reliance upon Christ. But the same sin besets us under a different form, when we rely on our Faith, or on our feelings, or on our assurances: feelings the most enthusiastic in religion are to be encouraged; the want of religious enthusiasm, the existence of a dark, cold, formal spirit in religion is indeed one of the evil things of the age; but beware of the tempter also, when religious fervour, the result of faith, is glowing in your souls. Satan will en-

deavour to deceive you by inducing you to suppose that when your feelings are fervent, your faith strong, and your assurance of Divine favour firm, all must then be well with you; but you may so rely on your faith, your feelings, or your fervour, as virtually to put them in the place of Christ; so to ascribe your salvation to Faith as to exclude Christ,—it is against this, it is to prevent our relying upon any thing but Christ, that God requires us to have recourse, besides our faith, besides our good works the fruit of faith, to some external act, in itself insignificant, in order to impress upon our minds the fact, that while Sanctification is a work within us, we must look for Justification to something without us, or rather distinct from us. Even Adam in innocency was taught to look for the preservation of his innocent nature out of himself: for it was to this end that God gave him the tree of life. He who was commanded to eat of the tree called the tree of life, was taught thereby that the maintenance and continuance of the life he then lived, a life of grace and glory, was not to be expected from his own strength, but from something without himself. And the same great lesson is taught to Adam corrupted and fallen, when he is instructed to touch the hem of His Saviour's garment. The instruction conveyed by such action is, that whatever may be our works, our feelings, or our faith, useful, nay absolutely necessary in their place; yet not our works, not our feelings, not our faith, but Christ, and Christ only, is our Saviour. "Come to Christ, come to Christ, look to Christ, and to Christ alone," this is the constant warning of the Church, the Spouse of Christ, to all her children; come to Christ, come to Christ, to Christ crucified, to Christ glorified, rely on Christ, seek to be one with Christ, this is the one sermon preached by the Church, not merely from her pulpits, but in every ordinance, every ceremony of the sanctuary. Christ the Prophet is heard from the pulpit; Christ the Priest applies His blood in the



## HIS GARMENT.

Sacraments ; Christ the King receives our homage in the ceremonies of the sanctuary ; Christ our God, our all in all, is worshipped in spirit and in truth by the heart.

Love Christ ; and if you do, you will prove your love by keeping His commandments, but having done all, remember that notwithstanding your love, the disease of sin is upon you, and touch the hem of His garment. Rely on Christ only for salvation, and prove that you do so, not by pleading your faith, as if faith were anything meritorious, but by permitting your faith to lead you to Christ, that you may touch the hem of His garment.

